

# IMG Physical Therapy

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## KNEE EXTENSION EXERCISE SHEET

Training or Rehabilitation of the lower extremity may take an extended period of time. A loss of strength, range of motion, and use is common after an injury or surgery. You may also experience some swelling and popping noises. Your strength, range of motion, and use of the knee can be improved if you follow your program. It may become frustrating at times, but you can be successful with hard work, patience, and listening to your body.

When you are exercising on your own at home there are some things to remember...

- \* Any specific exercise that causes pain, especially sharp knife like pain, is hindering the healing process for your injury and should be modified or discontinued until you notify your therapist.
- \* Increased swelling after exercise indicates that the exercise may be too difficult or it is not being done correctly. Be sure to ice that area of swelling and use a compression wrap as needed.
- \* Re-injuries during the rehabilitation process will slow your progress. If you get recurring pain either lower the resistance; lower the number of sets or repetitions; or reduce the range of motion to avoid the area of pain.
- \* You should experience muscle soreness, dull ache, fatigue, and stretching sensations, but the exercises should not increase the pain or swelling.
- \* When in doubt about how much weight to use for exercises, guess low. It is safer and easier to add weight than to hurt yourself with too much weight.
- \* Consult your Physician or Physical Therapist if any problems arise or if you have any questions regarding an exercise. It is better to make sure that you are doing an exercise correctly than to cause further injury by doing an exercise incorrectly.

These exercises are to be done if possible HOURLY.

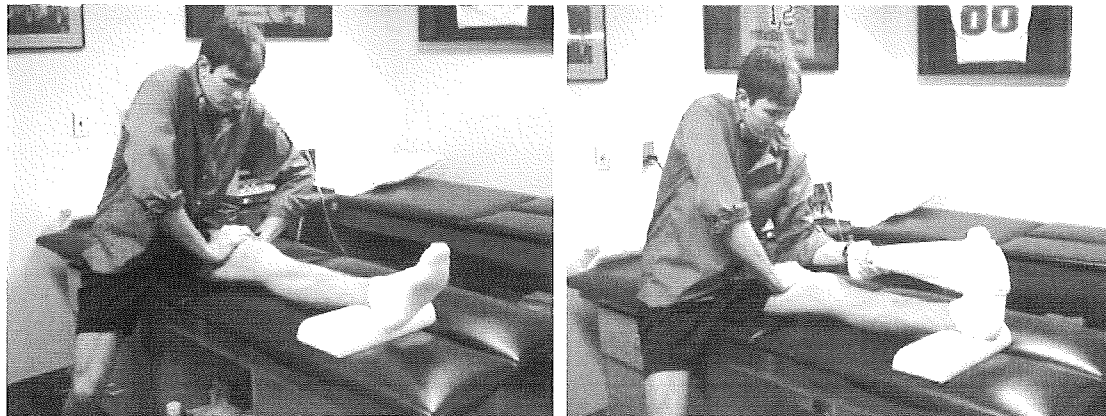
**\*\*Stretch for 5-10 minutes each time.\*\***

**A TOTAL OF 60 MINUTES A DAY FOR THIS EXERCISE!!!!!!**

Ice for 15 minutes after exercising and at the end of the day.

## Self Stretches for Knee Extension Range of Motion (Straightening)

Two stretches following surgery are simple self stretches for knee extension. The FIRST version is applying a stretch into extension by pushing on your lower thigh above your knee. You will want to use some sort of wedge under the heel to assure that you are restoring full motion. The SECOND and slightly more advanced version, you press down on your lower thigh while using a towel around the foot to pull up and simultaneously stretch the hamstrings. Hold either stretch for **30 seconds times X 10 reps.**



## Low Load Long Duration (LLLD) Stretching for Knee Extension

For the patient that is having a hard time achieving knee extension, the next line of defense is usually LLLD stretching. To perform this exercise, place a towel roll or similar item under the heel to allow full knee extension and then a comfortable weight over the distal thigh.



The purpose of this exercise is to be gentle and to hold the stretch for several minutes. Typically use anywhere from 6 to 12 pounds and hold the position for at least 10 minutes. If you are fighting against the weight, then it is too aggressive. Lower the weight and you'll see better results. Do for a Total of 60 minutes per day!!

Don't forget that you can apply moist heat to the knee simultaneously for even more benefit.